# GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN

Prepared Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

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for

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Education

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OLDER SISTERS ARE THE NURSE MAIDS OF JAPAN

Hard labor is the rule for Japanese women and the result is that "little sister" often has the care of younger children from morning until night. Children frequently are carried in this way until long after they are able to walk in their "geta" or clogs, and the young nurse maids do not limit their activities because of the beloved burden they bear. They romp and play, seemingly unmindful that baby's head just missed a stone wall, or that violent shaking is not always comfortable for their charges.

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## Malta: An Island Which Made the West Safe for Democracy

PERHAPS no other by-product of the World War save the recovery of Jerusalem stirred the imagination so profoundly as the British announcement of home rule for Malta.

The Malta island group is a shrine of mythology, and of sacred and profane history. Calypso, vampire of Homer's word motion pictures, rescued the shipwrecked Ulysses, and persuaded him to stay on the island. St. Paul swam ashore there after his vessel ran aground. Publius, the island governor, according to Acts XXVIII, received and lodged him, and the apostle founded a Christian community before he departed.

The date of Christ's birth is but the half-way point in Maltese chronology. Since its recorded history began ten nations have held sway over the coveted islands, beginning with the Phœnicians of Paul's time, and running a scale of Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Goths, Arabs, Germans, Spaniards, and French, until the present sovereignty of the British.

It has been said that Malta's local chronicle holds, in microcosm, the history of Europe, and that its archaeological remains mark each step in western civilization.

### Island An Actor in World Drama

But Malta was an actor, as well as a librarian, of historic drama. Literally she became the savior of the western world when the Knights of Malta beat back the Turkish hordes during the famous siege of 1565. The alien Knights, along with native Maltese, kept the blighting hand of the Moslem from crushing the lands which fostered those infant ideals of freedom which now are reflected in England's concession.

The thrills of that siege and the heroism displayed are unsurpassed. Of the 3,000 Maltese who fought with the Knights, practically all were killed. Characteristic of the Knights' valor was that of the defenders of Fort St. Elmo. Wounded and desperate, the few survivors of months of fighting went to a small chapel within the fort, embraced each other, received the Eucharist, and prepared to die. The little company was cut off from all assistance, but fought on. Many fell with sword in hand. Fearing they would be exterminated before the assailants were beaten back, a Maltese was sent to swim across the harbor by night to inform the Grand Master of the danger. The messenger delivered his "message to Garcia" by diving and swimming mostly under water. "Hold the fort, or die fighting," was the command he brought back. Every man obeyed—and died. But the consternation wrought by their frenzied resistance worked such havoc among the assailants that the news of it spread to other divisions of the Turkish forces, and turned the tide toward a Maltese victory.

### From Galley Slave to Head of a Navy

In command of the Turkish sea forces was Dragut, who rose from cabin boy and galley slave to be admiral of the Turkish navy. He was mortally wounded before Malta.



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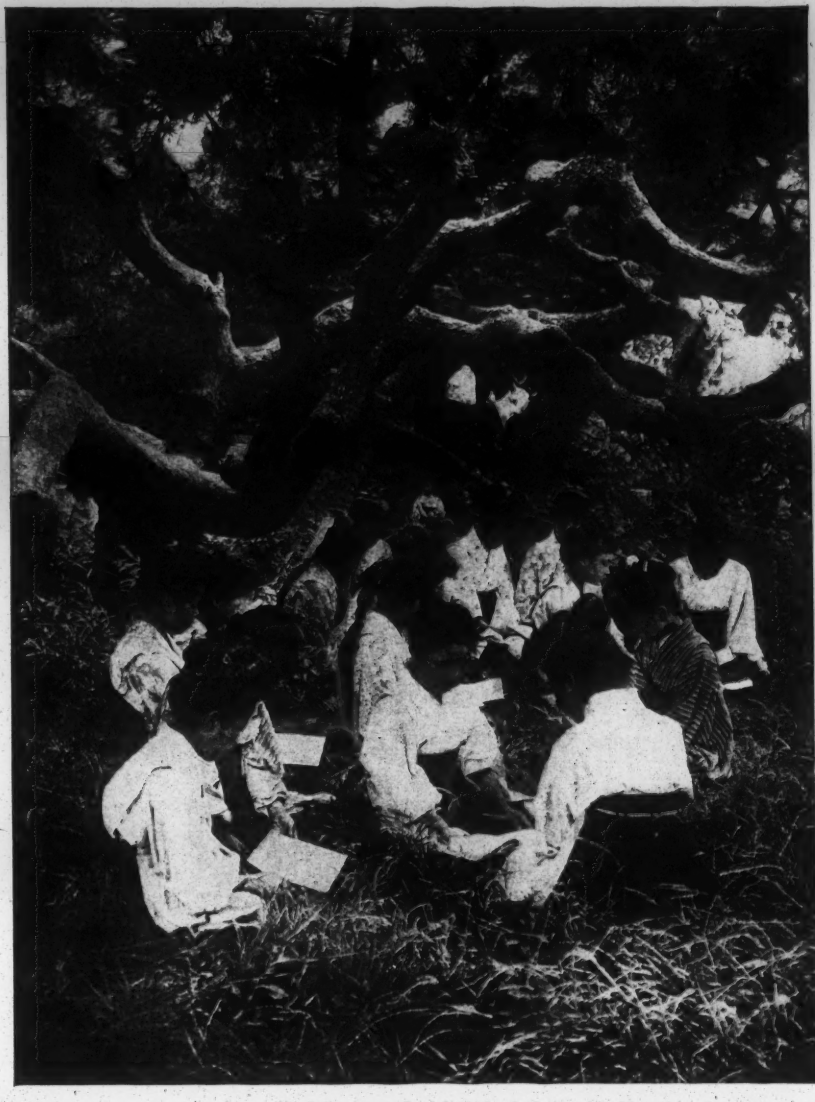

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THESE TOKIO GIRLS ARE WEARING THE JAPANESE STUDENT COSTUME DESCRIBED IN BULLETIN NO. 2.

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## Will Yum Yum Discard Her Kimono?

ACCORDING to recent news dispatches Japanese women are seeking a new dress better suited to modern life than the graceful kimono. American machine-made clothes are being considered to supplant the native dress of the women of Japan.

Probably in all the world there is no more charming figure than the Japanese maiden with tinted parasol, pigeon-toeing along in the attractive costume of her race. Throughout the history of Japanese art there have been changes of woman's dress, but wasp waists, balloon sleeves, hoop skirts and pantalettes have not been among the fashionable features. The same graceful lines of the kimono have prevailed in spite of minor changes, which are as patent to the Japanese woman as is the difference between Hudson seal and plush velour to an American lady of fashion.

Seen at a distance at twenty yards, walking in the shade of the majestic cryptomerias of Nikko or the bamboo of the byways, the diminutive Japanese lady, with her bright parasol and a touch of color showing at the border of her outer kimono, is an eye-delighting figure. She embodies grace and coquettish charm. Beside such an one, if observed from a distance, the Empress, gowned in Paris styles and wearing an enormous beauty-plumed foreign hat at her semi-annual garden parties, seems a sorry figure. Few indeed are the Japanese men who gain dignity from frock coat and silk hat, but fewer still are the Japanese women who add to their charm by assuming foreign dress.

### Kimonos of Seven Layers—and Then Some

The Japanese feminine costume is made up of layer after layer of lovely silks of the brightest hues, all discreetly hidden under an outer kimono of dark gray or black. Nor are the kimonos at all standard in pattern. Sleeve length, fullness, and a score of more subtle variations cry aloud the extreme *chic* of the best dressers.

To the peasant woman these changes make little difference. Her main demands are two—convenience and durability. For the field worker in a hot, damp climate, one requisite of the kimono is that the upper portion can be slipped off and tucked under the belt on hot days, and for the factory worker it is necessary that the long, dangling sleeves be girded back, out of the way of tools and gears.

For durability the peasant kimono is unexcelled. It is so constructed that the various pieces can be fitted together in different ways, so that what is the bottom edge today can, after the next washing, be basted up and down the back, where it can rest from heavy wear until the next washing. For each washing the kimonos are ripped apart and the different pieces are then dried and smoothed by spreading them, while wet, on a board in the sun. No electric iron is necessary and the parts are quickly basted together to serve until the next washing day. In this way the materials last for a long time.



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Scenically Malta has been well named a "precious stone set in a silver sea." Agriculturally it deserves the appellation of New Testament times, Melita, meaning "the isle of honey." It domiciles some 230,000 people, though it does not entirely support them. Its area is only one-tenth that of Rhode Island, but it has twice the density in population of that most densely populated State in the Union.

In addition to the main island the Malta group consists of Gozo, Comino, with Cominotto, an islet, and Filfla, a rock. Imagine Malta Island to be superimposed on the District of Columbia. Then the nearest Italian shores would be no farther away than Richmond is from Washington; Sicily would be a little north of Baltimore; the nearest point on the African shore would be at New York City, and Asia Minor would be not far beyond Chicago. This mental diagram shows why Britain regards Malta as the key, and safety lock, of her entire Eastern Empire.

Napoleon recognized this strategic value by taking Malta on his way to Egypt. But even Napoleon hesitated at the virtually impregnable, and used traitors instead of force for the capture.

## Porous Sandstone Leaves No Water for Streams

The dark hood, or faldetta, which Maltese women wear to this day, is ascribed in popular legend to their desire to hide their faces because of the terrorism of invading soldiers. Terraced fields form a characteristic feature of the landscape. A geographical curiosity is the absence of streams, because water is absorbed by the porous sandstone.

The present capital and principal seaport of Malta is Valletta, named for the Grand Master of the Knights at the time of the memorable siege. It was literally a "city built by gentlemen for gentlemen." It contained the palace of the chiefs of these Knights, originally the Knights of the Order of St. John, who resorted to Malta after the Turks had captured their stronghold at Rhodes. Both the main island and Gozo contain numerous relics, like those of England's Stonehenge, of the Mediterranean race that antedated the arrival of the Phœnicians.

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## Daghestan: Long a "Lost Island in Sea of History"

BEHIND many a laconic cable dispatch of today which sounds dry and unpronounceable lies a background of vivid romance and human interest. Recently these lines appeared in an Associated Press dispatch from Constantinople:

"The Lesghians, as these mountaineers are called, have already surrounded Petrovsk, in northern Daghestan, thereby cutting the railway from the Baku oil field to Rostof-on-the-Don, which passes through Petrovsk."

Thus remote Daghestan, "an island in the sea of history," suddenly emerged into world limelight in connection with Gen. Denikine's struggle for Russian supremacy. George Kennan, in a communication to The National Geographic Society, supplied the geographic setting and local color for this piece of news, as follows:

"In the southeastern corner of European Russia, between the Black Sea and the Caspian, in about the latitude of New York City, there rises abruptly from the dead level of the Tatar steppes a huge, broken wall of snowy, alpine mountains, which has been known to the world for more than 2,000 years as the great range of the Caucasus.

### World's Most Historic Mountain Range

"It is in some respects one of the most remarkable mountain masses in existence. Its peaks outrank those of Switzerland, both in height and in rugged grandeur of outline; its glaciers, ice-falls, and avalanches are all upon the most gigantic scale; the diversity of its climates is only paralleled by the diversity of the races that inhabit it; and its history, beginning with the Argonautic expedition, is more remarkable and eventful than that of any other range on the globe.

"No other region that I have ever seen presents, in an equally limited area, such diversities of climate, scenery, and vegetation. On the northern side of the range lie the treeless wandering grounds of the Nogai Tatars—illimitable steppes, where for hundreds of miles the weary eye sees in summer only a parched waste of dry steppe grass, and in winter an ocean of snow, dotted here and there with the herds and the black tents of nomadic Mongols.

"But cross the great range from north to south, and the whole face of Nature is changed. From a boundless steppe you come suddenly into a series of shallow, fertile valleys, blossoming with flowers, green with vine-tangled forests, sunny and warm as the south of France.

### Mountains' Shelter Makes Natural Hot House

"Sheltered by a rampart of mountains from the cold northern winds, vegetation here assumes an almost tropical luxuriance. Prunes, figs, olives, oranges, and pomegranates grow, almost without cultivation, in the open air; the magnificent forests of elm, oak, maple, Colchian poplar, and walnut are festooned with blossoming vines, and in autumn the sunny hillsides of Georgia, Kakhetia, and Mingrelia are fairly purple with vineyards of ripening grapes.



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## Crepes and Silks Used by Ladies of Fashion

For the lady of fashion, however, no such easy methods of dressmaking are possible. The finest crepes and silks are used, and so carefully are the patterns woven that the slightest deviation from the measurements for which the patterns were designed may subject the wearer to sidelong glances from her rivals. Far from being all alike, both pattern and cut are jealously guarded by the would-be leader in dress.

In the best shops special rooms are provided where a lady may secrete herself with a discreet designer, thus ensuring that Model 137A-Z will not be worn by her scrubwoman that season. Annual contests in design are held and the prizes are large enough to attract famous artists. These designs, of course, admit of a variety of color combinations and several individuals may choose the winning design and still have a distinctively finished product on account of the different colors employed. But each season there are thousands of new designs from which to choose.

## The "Obi" is the Mantilla of a Japanese Costume

The pride of the Japanese woman's costume, aside from the concealed design which distinguishes her ceremonial dress, is the obi. The most vain of matinee idols never selected his necktie with half the care which the Japanese fashion plate bestows upon her obi. There are as many ways of wearing this combination scarf and decoration as there are ways of wearing the hair among Japanese women, but no amount of care in arranging it can make up for a poor choice as to color and texture. Heavy brocades with gold thread liberally woven in are extremely popular, but older women affect soft rough-finish crepes of quiet tones.

Naturally, between a peasant kimono, dried on a board and basted together, and a $1,500 set of kimonos to make up a single costume, the schoolgirl is in a quandary. Those of her sisters who have been educated in America have returned with gowns that are different, to say the least.

The girl student wears an overskirt which begins at the waist, and blue or plum-colored serge has been much utilized in this insignia of the girl student, which is as distinctive as the military cap of the Japanese schoolboy. But copies of American fashion magazines, some of whose advertisements would sorely shock her brothers, only serve to give her new aspirations, and it is feared that the charming picture which the daintily draped figure, shuffling along on clogs and toeing in in order to keep her kimono together in front, may be supplanted by awkward schoolgirls whose attempts at foreign style are ludicrous to Japanese and foreigners alike.

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## Origin of American Military Decorations

IN view of the nation-wide interest in awards made by the American Government for distinguished services and acts of heroism during the World War, the following quotation from the Military Insignia number of *The National Geographic Magazine* is timely. In it Col. Robert E. Wyllie, U. S. A., gives the history of the three Army awards now bestowed and sets forth the circumstances under which they are given:

"In nearly all the countries which are included under the term of Great Powers decorations for distinguished service rendered to the State take precedence over those awarded for acts of valor, this on the theory that the services of statesmen, generals, and other public men high in the councils of the nation are of more importance and therefore deserve higher reward than do individual acts of gallantry on the battlefield.

"The exceptions to this rule are Great Britain and the United States, in both of which countries the primary valor decoration takes precedence over all others, and it is worthy of note that the standards set for these two rewards are not only higher than in any other country, but they are also more rigorously applied.

### Medal of Honor Awards Rare and Highly Prized

"Awards of the Victoria Cross (British) and of the Medal of Honor (American) are so rare and so jealously guarded that they are undoubtedly the two highest honors which can be bestowed for valor, and this may serve to explain why they are placed first in their respective countries, contrary to the custom of all others. An additional resemblance is that neither is ever bestowed on a foreigner. The Victoria Cross is limited to British subjects by royal decree; in the case of the Medal of Honor, there is no law prohibiting its award to a foreigner, but it has never been done, and custom is sometimes more potent than acts of Congress.

"The Medal of Honor was instituted by act of Congress in 1861 and was the earliest American decoration. However, it applied at that time only to enlisted men of the Navy. In the following year enlisted men of the Army were included, and by an act approved March 3, 1863, its provisions were extended to include officers in the Army, but naval officers were not eligible for this decoration until 1915.

### Present Provision of Law

"The conditions under which the Army Medal of Honor may be awarded have been changed from time to time. Today the law provides that:

"'The President is authorized to present, in the name of Congress, a Medal of Honor only to each person who, while an officer or enlisted man of the Army, shall hereafter, in action involving actual conflict with an enemy, distinguish himself conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life, above and beyond the call of duty.'



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"Climate here is only a question of altitude. Out of these semi-tropical valleys you may climb in a few hours to the highest limit of vegetable life and eat your supper, if you feel so disposed, on the slow-moving ice of a glacier.

"The Caucasian range may be regarded for all ethnological purposes as a great mountainous island in the sea of human history, and on that island now live together the surviving Robinson Crusoes of a score of shipwrecked states and nationalities—the fugitive mutineers of a hundred tribal *Bounties*.

"In Daghestan there are four or five thousand Jews, who, although they have lost their language and their national character, still cling to their religion; and among the high peaks of Tooshetia, in the same province, is settled a community of Christians, said to be the descendants of a band of medieval Crusaders. But these are exceptions; nine-tenths of the mountaineers are Mohammedans of the fiercest, most intolerant type.

## Mountains Form Veritable Tower of Babel

"The languages and dialects spoken by the different tribes of this heterogeneous population are more than thirty in number, and two-thirds of them are to be found in the province of Daghestan, at the eastern end of the range, where the racial diversity of the population is most marked.

"Languages spoken by only 12 or 15 settlements are comparatively common; and on the headwaters of the Andiski Koisu, in southwestern Daghestan, there is an isolated village of 50 or 60 houses—the *aoul* of Innokh—which has a language of its own, not spoken or understood by any other part of the whole Caucasian population.

"Of course, the life, customs, and social organizations of a people who originated in the way that I have described, and who lived for perhaps 2,000 years in almost complete isolation from all the rest of the world, presented when they first became known many strange and archaic features. In the secluded valleys and canyons of the eastern Caucasus it was possible to study a state of society that existed in England before the Norman conquest, and see in full operation customs and legal processes that had been obsolete everywhere else in Europe for at least a millennium.

"Many of the *aouls* of central and southern Daghestan bear a striking resemblance to the pueblos and cliff-dwellings of New Mexico. The stone-walled houses are built together in a compact mass on the steep slope of a high terrace, and the flat roofs rise in tiers or steps, one above another, just as they do in the settlements of our pueblo Indians. The roof of one house forms a small square front yard for the occupants of the house next above it, and ladders serve as means of intercommunication between the roofs of the ascending tiers."

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## Mexico: Some Timely Facts

PERTINENT geographical facts about Mexico are given in the following extracts from several communications to the National Geographic Society:

"Prior to 1836, Mexico, as a Spanish colony, and the United States covered approximately equal areas of North America, but the Texas secession and the result of the Mexican War added nearly a million square miles to our territory, and the extent of Mexico now is less than one-fourth that of continental United States.

"But our neighbor republic still has territorial expanse equal to the aggregate of pre-war Austria, Hungary, Germany, France, Great Britain, and Ireland.

"The total area of the Republic of Mexico (767,000 square miles) is less than that of our five largest States—Texas, California, Montana, New Mexico, and Arizona—combined, all of these except Montana having been a part of New Spain 75 years ago. None of the 31 political subdivisions of our neighbor is as large as any of the five States named, but four Mexican States contiguous to the United States aggregate an extent greater than that of Texas.

### Largest Mexican State About the Size of Utah

"Chihuahua, the largest Mexican State, approximates in area (87,000 square miles) that of Utah, Sonora (77,000 square miles) of Nebraska, Coahuila (63,000 square miles) of Georgia, and Durango (40,000 square miles) of Kentucky. Nine subdivisions of the United States (excluding Alaska) are larger than Chihuahua, 15 of greater magnitude than Sonora, and 32 larger than Durango. The rugged and desert character of the Mexican border States support sparse populations, except where mining exploitation and cities resulting therefrom have concentrated settlement.

"The melting snows from the San Juan and Sangre de Christo ranges of the Rocky Mountains in southern Colorado form the genesis of the Rio Grande, which, after following south through New Mexico, bends southeast at the western extremity of Texas, courses between it and Mexico for a distance equal to that of Saint Louis from New York, and descends in 1,100 miles from an elevation of 4,500 feet to sea-level at the Gulf of Mexico.

"Except when in flood, the Rio Grande is apparently an unimportant stream and readily crossed, for the normal flow is well utilized for irrigation in both countries; but it has carved in a part of its course canyons difficult of exploration. The changes wrought by freshets, which shift the channel, demanded the attention of an international commission, which has adjusted the boundary along the Rio Grande to meet the varying conditions. The uncertainty of this is illustrated by a claim some years ago that a portion of the important city of El Paso, Texas, was Mexican soil. The remaining 700 miles of the international boundary to the west separating our neighbor Republic from New Mexico, Arizona, and California, is through an arid desert section, much of which is mountainous. This is not a direct line, but has five changes in alignment, which have been



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"The Distinguished Service Medal, the American decoration which is second only to the Medal of Honor, can be awarded by the President to 'any person who, while serving in any capacity with the Army of the United States, shall distinguish himself or herself by specially meritorious service to the Government in a duty of great responsibility.' The Distinguished Service Medal for the Navy is awarded under exactly the same conditions as for the Army and was established by act of Congress in February, 1919.

"It should be noted that the services to be rewarded with this decoration do not have to be rendered at the front, much less in action, the requirement of great responsibility being the governing factor. It was intended to be used in the same way as the Legion of Honor of France and other similar orders with which European countries reward the great leaders of their military and naval forces.

## Not All Fighting Done At the Front

"The institution of the Distinguished Service Medal in the Army of the United States was in recognition of the fact that in an army of modern times all the fighting is not done on the fighting front, but that those who served by way of preparing others and those whose services were especially necessary in association with military operations are equally serving in the cause.

"The Distinguished Service Cross is purely an Army decoration and is bestowed as a reward for individual acts of 'extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against an armed enemy' not warranting the award of the Medal of Honor.

"It is indicative of the growing recognition of the important position of women in the modern state, that both the Distinguished Service Medal and the Distinguished Service Cross have been awarded to women."

Bulletin No. 4, March 1, 1920.

accurately surveyed and established by 258 permanent monuments easily distinguishable.

### Total Area About One-fourth That of United States

"Mexico has an area approximately one-fourth of that of the United States, a fourth of whose area once belonged to Mexico. It has a coast-line some 6,000 miles long, although its greatest length is less than 2,000 miles and its greatest breadth only 750 miles. Although its area is only one-fourth that of Brazil, its population is approximately equal to that of the largest republic of the southern continent.

"Some 15,000,000 souls live within its borders, of whom more than two-thirds can neither read nor write.

"Of the total population, only 19 per cent are white, 43 per cent are of mixed parentage, while 38 per cent still maintain their Indian blood uncorrupted. The foreign population in 1912 numbered 100,000 souls, of whom 30,000 were Americans, 20,000 Spanish, and 5,000 British.

"Mexico probably has a greater range of remarkable vegetation than any other country in the world.

### Mexico Once a Land of Many Railroads

"No other country in the New World, south of the Rio Grande, was so well supplied with railroads as was Mexico prior to the Madero revolution. Then it had 20,000 miles of up-to-date American railroad. At six different points lines crossed the frontier from the United States, and Laredo, Eagle Pass, and El Paso gateways handled much traffic to and from Mexico. The Mexican railroads carried 11,000,000 passengers annually at that time, and handled about 11,000,000 tons of freight. Their total revenues amounted to about $40,000,000.

"Humboldt once pronounced Mexico 'the treasure-house of the world.' Before the World War it produced one-third of the world's silver, a considerable percentage of its gold, one-ninth of its lead, and one-twentieth of its copper. The country's mineral production, exclusive of iron, coal, and petroleum, amounted to $158,000,000 in 1910. With the exception of Campeche, Tabasco, and Yucatan, every State in the Mexican Republic possesses mines, of which there are 21,000, covering 633,000 acres of mineral lands, and giving employment to half a million men. Yet probably less than one-fourth of the mineral possibilities of the Republic have been exploited. Prior to the outbreak of the Madero revolution, upward of 5,000 mining claims were registered each year."

Bulletin No. 5, March 1, 1920.

LOADING BURROS WITH THEIR CARGOES OF BRICK: MEXICO.